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For Immediate Release

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Nags Head Woods Wildfire Remains at 200 Acres *Efforts to Contain Fire Proceeding According to Plan*

DURHAM – The wildfire at The Nature Conservancy’s Nags Head Woods Preserve continues to burn, but the fire has not grown significantly since this morning and no structures have been damaged.

Folks in the area may have seen increased smoke, but that is related to ongoing efforts to contain the fire by setting a backfire – deliberately burning areas in the path of the wildfire. This backfiring checks an oncoming fire because it removes fuel. When a wildfire moves into this blackened area there is nothing left to burn, so the fire burns out.

The fire is still confined to the marsh and swamp forest on the west side of the Conservancy’s Nags Head Woods Preserve. Public safety and prevention of damage to structures is the first goal of this work. So far, no structures have been damaged as a result of the fire.

The North Carolina Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Town of Nags Head have staff and equipment onsite and are working to contain the fire. The Nature Conservancy has brought in trained crews and equipment from its Southern Pines and Wilmington offices.

The fire was reported at 9:20 Tuesday night. Crews have been fighting the fire since that time. The cause of the fire has not been determined, but there were no storms, house fires or controlled burns in the area at the time of the fire. The last controlled burn in the area was more than a year ago.

At more than 1,100 acres, The Conservancy’s Nags Head Woods Preserve is the largest remaining intact maritime forest on the East Coast. More information about the preserve is available at nature.org/nhw.

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The Nature Conservancy is a leading conservation organization working around the world to protect ecologically important lands and waters for nature and people. To date, the Conservancy and its more than one million members have been responsible for the protection of more than 18 million acres in the United States and have helped preserve more than 117 million acres in Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific. The North Carolina Chapter of The Nature Conservancy and its 28,000 members have protected nearly 700,000 acres in the state. Visit us on the Web at nature.org/northcarolina.